



**TESTIMONY TO THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE ON RAISED BILL S.B. 948, AN ACT ADDRESSING
EDUCATION FUNDING AND RACIAL EQUITY**

March 3, 2021

Co-Chairs Senator McCrory and Representative Sanchez, Ranking Members Senator Berthel and Representative McCarty, and distinguished members of the Education Committee:

My name is Jossie Perez. I am a proud Bridgeport resident who has 2 daughters in elementary school. I am here today in support of SB 948: An Act Addressing Education Funding and Racial Equity in Connecticut.

You can't tell because we're on camera, but I am in a wheelchair and have been disabled for almost half of my life. A motorcycle accident put me in a wheelchair, but I would say my choices helped make that happen as well. I didn't have that many positive role models growing up in Bridgeport. I ended up being in the wrong company and almost destroying my life. God saved me, and he gave me another chance at life by giving me 2 beautiful daughters to raise and make sure they make better choices than I did.

Part of making better choices is having better options. The options for them aren't that different than the options I had. Schools are still poor. Neighborhoods are still run down. From what I see, Bridgeport has been completely abandoned by our state government. Why is that? Are our lives not worth investing in? Do we not deserve to be happy, healthy, and successful?

I believe we do deserve those things, which is why I'm here to make it so that you can't ignore us anymore. You can't pretend we aren't here. And you can't keep using the excuse that we don't care enough about our community to make change worth it.

My daughters deserve better options. Pass SB948 so that they can start having them. Thank you.

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